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ABSTRACT

The development of skills for group evaluation and facilitation in today's team environment is an essential component of the learning process for the student of communication. Until recently there has been no integrated model for the consideration of small groups and teams that incorporated findings from psychology, social psychology, management and communication> SYMLOG (SYstem for the Multiple Level Observation of Groups), developed by Robert F. Bales and his colleagues, provides this multidisciplinary approach and has the potential to become the dominant methodology for working with groups and teams. SYMLOG is a theory of personality and group dynamics, integrated with some practical means for measuring and changing behavior and values in a democratic way. It is designed to assess both individual and group functioning and to assist groups in understanding themselves and how they relate to one another. While not designed as a small group communication tool, SYMLOG has much to offer the communication researcher and practitioner, and has begun to be integrated into the communication classrooms and texts. Among its advantages in the classroom are its strong theoretical underpinnings in social-psychological theory, its ease of use, its capability to provide insight into both individual and group perceptions of functioning simultaneously, as well as the graphic visual representation of group dynamics. (Contains 48 references and 5 figures.) (TB)

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SYMLOG in the Communication Classroom:

Applications for Small Group Communication Behavior Awareness

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SYMLOG in the Communication Classroom:

Applications for Small Group Communication Behavior Awareness

The development of skills for understanding behavior in groups is an essential component of the learning process for the student of communication, as teams are increasingly used to build community, rapport and increased effectiveness. This paper encourages the use of Bales and Cohen's SYMLOG (Systematic Multiple Level Observation of Groups) theory in the communication classroom as a means for helping students understand the link between behavior and perceptions of others. A 5-step model for classroom use is proposed which focuses on the link between observed behavior and the subsequent perceptions and value attributions. The five steps are: 1) SYMLOG theory; 2) Behavioral coding; 3) Behavior ratings; 4) Value ratings; and 5) Feedback and comparison.

SYMLOG in the Communication Classroom:

Applications for Small Group Communication Behavior Awareness

The development of skills for group evaluation and facilitation in today's team environment is an essential component of the learning process for the student of communication. Until recently, there has been no integrated model for the consideration of small groups and teams, which incorporated findings from psychology, social psychology, management, and communication. SYMLOG provides this multidisciplinary approach and has the potential to become the dominant methodology for working with groups and teams (Keyton and Wall, 1989). SYMLOG, an acronym for the SYstem for the Multiple Level Observation of Groups, was developed by Robert F. Bales and his colleagues as the culmination of over 40 years of work with groups. It is a theory of personality and group dynamics, integrated with some practical means for measuring and changing behavior and values in a democratic way (Bales, 1988). It is designed to assess both individual and group functioning and to assist groups in understanding themselves and how they relate to one another. While not designed as a small group communication tool SYMLOG has much to offer the communication researcher (Keyton and Wall, 1989) and practitioner (Kelly and Duran, 1992), and has begun to be integrated into communication classrooms and texts (see Brilhart and Galanes, 1992). The purpose of this paper is to encourage the use of Bales and Cohen's (1979) SYMLOG into the communication instructional process and suggest a behavioral focus for its application in classroom development.

The Communication Classroom

As communication educators, we are charged with helping students understand the interaction environment, including how the intrapersonal environment impacts accomplishment in the interpersonal environment. Our task is to explicate the various

factors in the interaction environment, to help the student understand the variables that impact those factors, and to provide the student with knowledge and skills to function more effectively within that interaction environment. Ultimately, the goal for our students is to have a synthesis of theory and application, or praxis, which will allow them to utilize their knowledge to be more effective communicators.

To accomplish these goals, a variety of methods are available to the communication educator. Use is made of texts, lectures, cases, experiential exercises, discussion, writing experiences, and videotape to facilitate the comprehension and integration of knowledge on the part of the student. Synthesis occurs at the point of praxis - where the student is able to "put in all together" and understand how the knowledge he/she has gained may be applied in a variety of contexts.

Much research is available which highlights the importance of active involvement by the student for successful learning to occur (Sullivan, 1986; see also McKeachie, 1986). We know that adults learn more effectively when able to participate actively and that they are interested in knowing how the information they receive can be applied in practical ways. Critical thinking skills, increased recall, and integration are also developed by active involvement on the part of the learner because there is an opportunity to receive feedback on performance and to make modifications (McKeachie, 1986).

So what is special about the communication classroom; what makes it different from our students' other classroom experiences? We believe the critical element is the focus on the interactive process itself - the behavior- whether in verbal or nonverbal form, which gives us our cues about the interpersonal environment. But students do not always make the link between what goes on intrapersonally - in their own heads - and the interaction environment. They may have trouble understanding their own perceptions in relation to the perceptions of others and concurrently, have difficulty understanding how their behavior and their perceptions of others are linked to the intrapersonal environment.

Until now, it has been difficult to explicate this link between the internal perceptions students have, which comes from their observation of the interpersonal environment, and the interaction process - the communicative behavior of the individual and others in the interactive field. However, with the introduction a new field theory, SYMLOG (Bales and Cohen, 1979), which takes into account these multiple levels of behavior, communication educators have a method to help students "picture" their group environment as well as, and more importantly for our purposes here, better perceive the relationships between behavior in groups and perceptions of others. SYMLOG, well grounded in social-psychological theory, provides an innovative way to help students learn about the relationship between intrapersonal communication and the interactive process.

We begin with a brief discussion of SYMLOG theory and methods, discuss the importance of communication competence in the communication classroom, and then present a model for using SYMLOG in the classroom to teach students about the link between communicative behaviors and assessments we make of other individuals. We then highlight some possible ways that SYMLOG can be used to heighten awareness of behavior important to the development of perceptions of ourselves by others in the small group communication classroom.

Theoretical Background

SYMLOG is a theory of personality and group dynamics that includes a method of measuring group interaction (Bales and Cohen, 1979). SYMLOG theory integrates findings from psychology, social psychology, and the social sciences. Bales refers to it as "a new field theory" (Bales, 1985) in that it accounts for the fact that all behavior occurs in a context. It is assumed that the personal, interpersonal, group, and situational contexts influence behavior and it is necessary to understand these contexts in order to successfully understand and influence behavior patterns (Bales, 1988). Bales contends

that the psychological processes constitute "an interactive gestalt (field) in which the parts influence each other systematically in such a way that some relatively simple dynamic pattern often emerges" (Bales, 1985, p. 1). SYMLOG facilitates the consideration of the dynamics of individual personalities, values, and behavior, as well as the processes of the whole group, while simultaneously considering the impact of the total organization upon the group. It uses an individual's own and others' observations about individual values and behaviors within the intact group. Since his retirement from Harvard, Bales and his colleagues have continued to conduct research through the SYMLOG Consulting Group and at universities around the world (Hare, 1989). His recent work on SYMLOG is not published in text form, but rather as a series of computer programs, in particular, focusing on norms for effective leadership and teamwork (Hare, 1992).

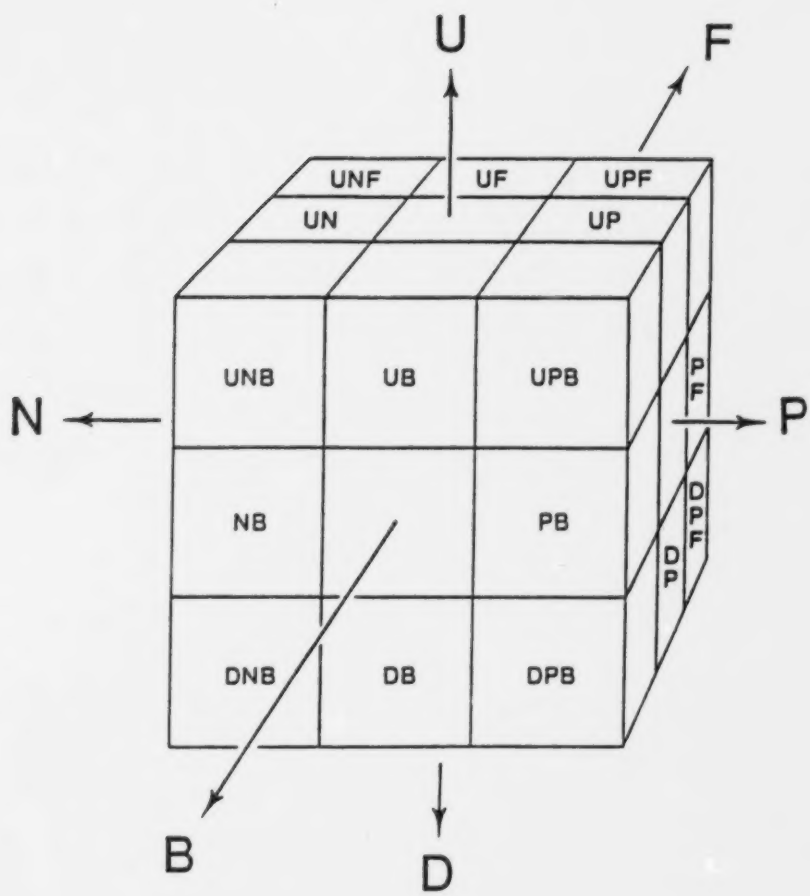
SYMLOG Dimensions

The SYMLOG theory is based on three bi-polar dimensions of behavior, which comprise a three-dimensional, cubic space (Bales, 1979, 1985, 1988). All behaviors, both verbal and nonverbal, can be represented within this cubic space. Bales contends that psychologists have repeatedly discovered, and forgotten, these three dimensions of behavior (see examples cited by Bales (1985): Eysenck, 1954; Mehrabian, 1980; Osgood, Suci, and Tannenbaum, 1957; and Wish, 1976).

The three orthogonal dimensions which make up the SYMLOG space (see Figure 1) are: (1) Dominant vs Submissive (Upward-Downward), which refers to the dominance or submissiveness of one's behavior; (2) Friendly vs Unfriendly (Positive-Negative), which refers to the friendliness/unfriendliness of one's behavior; and (3) Acceptance of authority (task oriented) vs Non-acceptance of authority (Forward-Backward), which refers to the task orientation or emotional expressiveness of one's behavior (Keyton and Wall, 1989). Behaviors can be seen as a combination of any of these dimensions and are used for assessing both individual and group behaviors (for a complete discussion of the

Figure 1

The SYMLOG Cube Diagram



Directions in the Physical Space Model

Metaphorical names for the physical directions coordinated with names for describing the Value directions for Individual and Organizational Values

U = "Upward" = Values on Dominance
D = "Downward" = Values on Submissiveness
P = "Positive" = Values on Friendliness
N = "Negative" = Values on Unfriendliness
F = "Forward" = Values on Acceptance of Authority
B = "Backward" = Values on Non-Acceptance of Authority

SYMLOG dimensions, see Bales and Cohen, 1979, Bales, 1983, 1985, 1988, and Hare, 1989). The three dimensions of behavior and values have been found to be both theoretically and statistically independent over a large population of different types of groups (Hare, 1989; Isenberg, 1986; and Polley, 1983).

Methods

The large cube representing the social-psychological space is divided into 27 smaller cubes, each representing 1-3 of the vectors. The one in the center of the cube is the average - not perceived to be high of low in any of the dimensions. To derive the measures of the dimensions, questionnaires or observations are used, with 26 statements or categories reflecting each one of the 26 smaller cubes. To identify an individual's style of interpersonal behavior within a specific group, Bales has developed a 26 item rating list (see Figure 2) with sets of adjectives indicating each of the 26 vectors (Bales, 1980). Methods for measuring values, as well as interpersonal behavior, have been developed which are particularly useful in organizational and management settings. These same ratings can be used to describe a concept, an image, or an idea. Studies using both the rating forms and the observational coding find the expected correlations between the measures (Hare, 1992).

An individual may observe a group's behavior and complete the 26 item behavior questionnaire or observe behavior and record and code specific acts. The simplest way to do direct observation of behavior is to use the 26 item behavior rating, but coding provides the most detailed analysis. Any behavior, image, or element of the situation can be scored in terms of the SYMLOG space (Hare, 1989). An assessment is made of whether each behavior is U, D, or neither, P, N, or neither, and F, B, or neither. The scoring method can be complex and requires training for reliable results, while the ratings can be used with little instruction (Rywick, 1987). "For participants, the rating system has face validity, is easy to use and does not require familiarity with the theoretical foundations" (Keyton and Wall, 1989, p. 546). The ratings combine both verbal and

Figure 2

SYMLOG Behavioral Rating Form

SYMLOG™ CONSULTING GROUP

Person you are rating: _____

Reflect on the work-related experiences you have had with the person you are about to rate. Whether you have worked closely with this person or have had only limited contact, keep your impressions of him or her in mind as you answer the question to the right. Not all of the items in a set may seem to go together. IF EVEN ONE FITS, USE IT AS YOUR GUIDE.

QUESTION:
In general, what kinds of BEHAVIOR does this person actually show?

DESCRIPTIVE ITEMS—Behavior Form Copyright © 1987 by Robert F. Bales	Directional Indicators			
1 Dominant, active, talkative	U	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
2 Outgoing, sociable, extroverted	UP	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
3 Persuasive, convincing, shows task leadership	UPF	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
4 Business-like, decisive, impersonal	UF	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
5 Strict, demanding, controlling	UNF	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
6 Tough, competitive, aggressive	UN	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
7 Rebellious, unruly, self-centered	UNB	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
8 Joking, witty, clever	UB	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
9 Protects others, sympathetic, nurturant	UPB	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
10 Friendly, democratic, group-oriented	P	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
11 Cooperative, reasonable, constructive	PF	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
12 Serious, logical, objective	F	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
13 Rule-oriented, insistent, inflexible	NF	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
14 Self-protective, unfriendly, negativistic	N	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
15 Uncooperative, pessimistic, cynical	NB	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
16 Expresses emotions, shows feelings	B	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
17 Likeable, affectionate, enjoyable	PB	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
18 Trustful, accepting, sensitive	DP	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
19 Modest, respectful, dedicated	DPF	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
20 Cautious, dutiful, obedient	DF	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
21 Constrained, conforming, self-sacrificing	DNF	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
22 Depressed, unsociable, resentful	DN	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
23 Alienated, rejects task, withdraws	DNB	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
24 Indecisive, anxious, holds back	DB	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
25 Quietly contented, satisfied, unconcerned	DPB	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
26 Silent, passive, uninvolved	D	Rarely	Sometimes	Often

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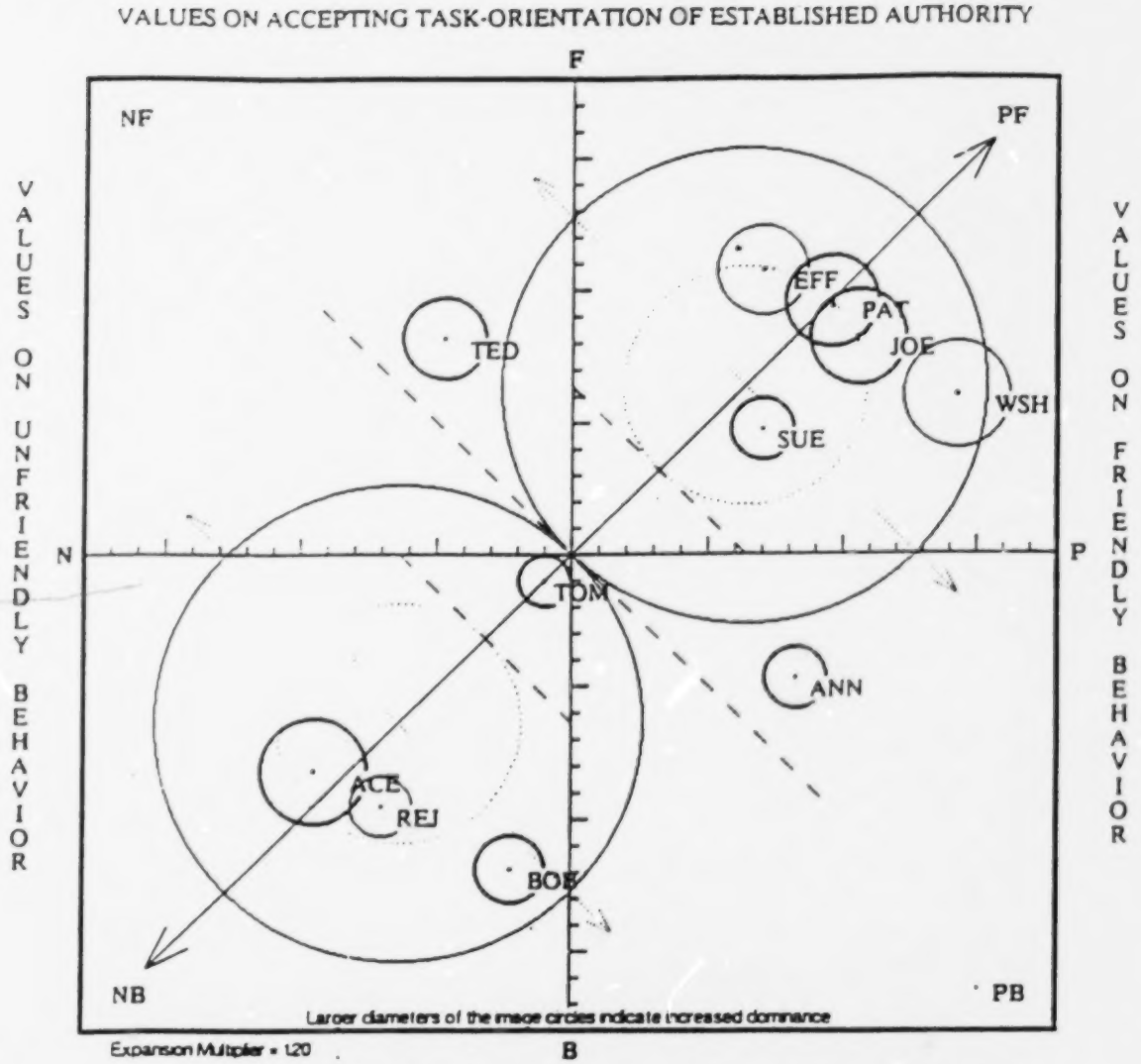
nonverbal behavior into one global assessment of behavior or values. The majority of the research conducted with SYMLOG has used the adjective rating format and it has been translated into many different languages (Bales, Koenigs, and Roman, 1987). The validity and reliability of both the behavioral and the values rating format have been well established (for a more detailed treatment of the methods, reliability, and validity, see Hare, 1989; Keyton and Wall, 1989). Despite the increased difficulty and the need for coding reliability, we record behavior rather than record perceptions on the behavior rating questionnaire. We recommend showing students the relationship between the two by first making them aware of the behaviors on which their perceptions of individuals are based and how these become the basis for their perceptual ratings of behavior.

Theory of Group Dynamics

A pictorial representation of the individual or group's assessment, the Field Diagram, allows examination and evaluation of both the group field and the individuals in the field, as well as comparison between the two (see figure 3 for example). In addition, the concepts of polarization and unification, which address the tendency of groups to develop patterns of behavior over time which interfere with effective group functioning, are assessed to assist the group in dealing with conflict and the dynamics of the group (Bales, 1985). As Keyton and Wall note, methodology and theory are inseparable and "explanations of group behavior are based on the configuration of individuals and groups within the SYMLOG space as presented in the Field Diagram" (Keyton and Wall, 1989, p. 546). Figure 3 displays the sample results of ratings made by group members about their group and several concepts. It shows the diversity represented in the group and illustrates the patterns of group interaction. The large circle in the upper right quadrant represents the Reference Circle, which contains images that share similar kinds of values and behaviors. The Opposition Circle, in the lower left quadrant, contains those images which the group tends to reject in themselves and others. In Figure 3, the more positive members, Pat Joe, and Sue are in the right (P) side of the

Figure 3

Sample SYMLOG Field Diagram



space, while the more negative members, Ace, Bob, and Tom are in the left (N) side of the space. These two groups are perceived to share differing values and behaviors; thus the group is likely to polarize. The arrows on the ends of the Line of Polarization represent the theoretical tendency of images on one side of the diagram to move together (unify) in the direction of the arrow and move away from images of the other side of the diagram (polarize). The angle of this line indicates the direction of the most damaging potential conflict. The dominance (U) and submissive (D) dimensions are represented by the size of the circles, with the larger circles representing the more dominant images and the smaller circles the more submissive images.

Group members whose images do not fall within the two circles tend to be isolated from the major groups. Depending upon their location they may play the role of the scapegoat (Ted in Figure 3), thus providing a temporary unifying target for the whole group, or they may function as a mediator (Ann in Figure 3), with the potential to act as an intermediary between the polarized subgroups.

Research has shown that groups which are perceived as effective are most likely to be relatively unified within the PF quadrant (Bachman, 1988; Hogan, 1988). The Field Diagrams can be developed from the perspective of the external observer, participant observer, an individual participant or the group average of many participants and/or observers. The ratings can also be presented in the form of a Bargraph, where a profile of ratings for the individual or group is compared directly with a standard for effective performance in a given type of situation (Bales, 1988; Hare, 1989).

Applications of SYMLOG

SYMLOG has been used in the assessment of the composition of groups and the improvement of teamwork (Bales, Cowen, and Koenigs, 1986), the selection of individuals for leadership (Bales and Isenberg, 1982; Kriger and Barnes, 1988) and team positions (Cowen, 1992), as well as research in organizational socialization (Jesuino, 1988), program development, personnel evaluation (Hogan, 1988), conflict resolution,

coalition building (Bales, 1985), and organizational development (Fassheber and Terjung, 1988). Innovative uses of SYMLOG also include its use in family therapy (Bronstein-Burrows, 1981), in individual and group therapy (Kressel, 1987), analysis of legends in organizations (Polley, 1987), inter-group cooperation (Beck, 1988), and in literary analysis (Rupert, 1988) and rhetorical criticism (Bormann, 1972). SYMLOG has been used within the classroom in many different settings (Bales and Cohen, 1979; Hattink, 1985; and Rywick, 1991) and has already been incorporated into communication classes with great success (Kelly and Duran, 1992). As such, and in light of the powerful capabilities of the theory and method, it is particularly appropriate to use this tool within the communication classroom, including but not limited to: small group, interpersonal, and organizational classes and seminars.

A Model for Classroom Use

Behavior-assessment link

In the communication classroom, and in small group classes in particular, educators are concerned with students developing an awareness of the importance of communication competence (Brilhart and Galanes, 1992). Communication is the principal means by which group members achieve their goal (Barge and Hirokawa, 1989). Research has shown that two types of communication competencies are required by groups to accomplish work: task and relational competencies (Barge and Hirokawa, 1989; Hirokawa, 1982; Poole, 1983). The type of communication competency required has been shown to depend upon the type of situation (Barge and Hirokawa, 1989). Communicators who can adapt their verbal and nonverbal behavior to the constraints of the situation tend to be perceived as more competent. SYMLOG is a means to graphically depict the functioning of an individual or group along those dimensions and to also provide insight about the impact of the situation on that functioning (Kelly and Duran, 1992). It provides a mechanism to enable students to discuss both the task and

maintenance functions of individuals and groups as well as allowing them to conceptualize how the overt behavior of an individual or a group leads to perceptions of other individuals and their subsequent location within the theoretical space. SYMLOG provides a framework for self-awareness - a knowledge of our own value judgments and how they affect our perceptions (Savage, 1985).

Communication competence is the basis for effective group functioning. Group leaders, in particular, "must possess various encoding and decoding skills that enable her or him to produce and sequence communicative symbols and messages so as to facilitate the group's ability to understand and deal with existing barriers and problems appropriately" (Barge and Hirokawa, 1989, p. 173). Behavior is communication. When we perceive or are perceived in a given manner, that perception is based upon communicative behavior. Each individual then makes an interpretation or assigns meaning to the observed behavior and responds based upon that interpretation.

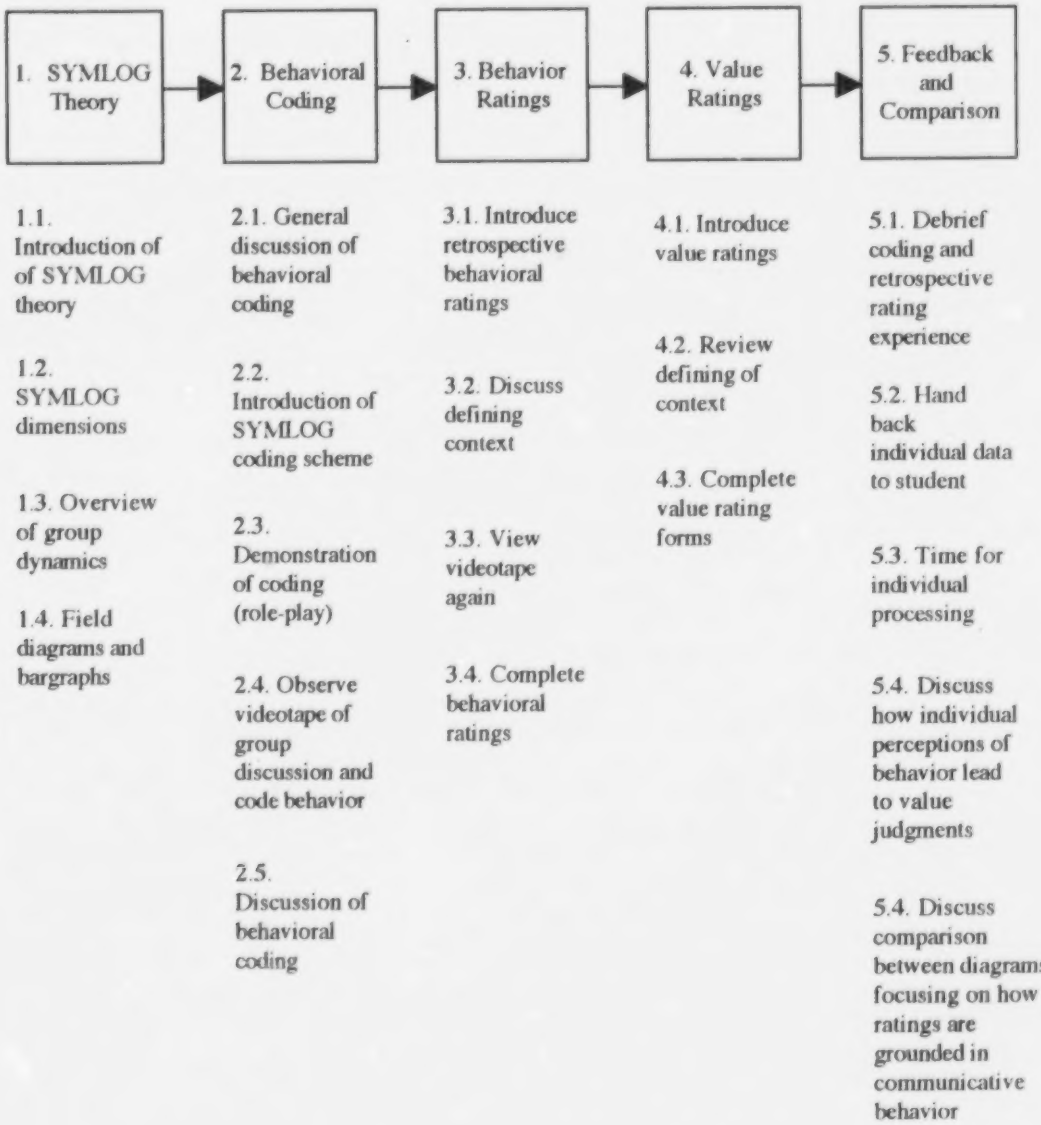
One of the most difficult skills to teach students of communication is to recognize the link between the behaviors a person actually exhibits and the interpretation or global conception others have of a person, based on those behaviors. As educators, we have a responsibility to assist the student in recognizing those links and to distinguish the behaviors upon which judgments are made. The small group communication experience stresses the importance of observing groups for gathering information and recognizing group roles. "Every student of discussion and group processes needs the experience of observing discussion groups at work" (Brilhart and Galanes, 1992, p. 323). Within the communication classroom, students are preparing to serve as participants, educators, and consultants to groups and it is imperative that they be familiar with actual group functioning. It is the communication educator's responsibility to teach students to be effective group members and to understand how to assist other groups to function more effectively. As discussed earlier, we believe that students must be able to identify the behaviors which accompany perceptions of effective group functioning. Use of

SYMLOG behavior rating scales does not require such heightened awareness and for communication students, by itself, is insufficient to accomplish this goal.

SYMLOG is an excellent means for helping the communication student to connect the impressions individuals have of group members, the dynamics of a group, and the behaviors which lead to those impressions. The Interaction Scoring method of SYMLOG provides a detailed description of the behaviors for each of the 26 different dimensions of the SYMLOG space. This, combined with the field diagram, which graphically depicts how the individual and the group is seen as functioning, is an exciting an innovative means for teaching the communication student to recognize behavior-assessment link. An examination of the various methods for obtaining SYMLOG scores also provides an opportunity to teach the communication student the link between a retrospective rating methodology and observable behavior, thus explicating how the ratings are grounded in behavior. We propose a five step process using SYMLOG to help students understand this behavior-assessment link. Once an awareness of this link is made the student can learn to make the necessary choices regarding his or her own communicative acts as well as the interpretations she or he makes regarding others' communicative behavior. As communication scholars and teachers know well, in striving for communication competence within the small group, we are ultimately teaching behavioral skills - the ability to analyze group interaction, to follow structured roles, to ask for information, and solicit both task and socio-emotional feedback; in short, to create a more effective atmosphere for problem-solving.

We propose the following model for using SYMLOG within the communication classroom as means for illuminating the behavior-assessment link, as a tool for enhancing the group observation skills of students, and as a means for increasing students' awareness (and potential change) of their own communicative behavior in groups.

Figure 4: SYMLOG: A Model for Illuminating the Behavior-Assessment Link


1. SYMLOG Theory
2. Behavioral Coding
3. Behavior Ratings
4. Value Ratings
5. Feedback and Comparison
1.1. Introduction of of SYMLOG theory
1.2. SYMLOG dimensions
1.3. Overview of group dynamics
1.4. Field diagrams and bargraphs
2.1. General discussion of behavioral coding
2.2. Introduction of SYMLOG coding scheme
2.3. Demonstration of coding (role-play)
2.4. Observe videotape of group discussion and code behavior
2.5. Discussion of behavioral coding
3.1. Introduce retrospective behavioral ratings
3.2. Discuss defining context
3.3. View videotape again
3.4. Complete behavioral ratings
4.1. Introduce value ratings
4.2. Review defining of context
4.3. Complete value rating forms
5.1. Debrief coding and retrospective rating experience
5.2. Hand back individual data to student
5.3. Time for individual processing
5.4. Discuss how individual perceptions of behavior lead to value judgments
5.4. Discuss comparison between diagrams, focusing on how ratings are grounded in communicative behavior

The following is a detailed explanation of the proposed model.

SYMLOG Theory (see Figure 4)

The first day is spent covering the basic theoretical underpinnings of SYMLOG. A copy of the SYMLOG Case Study Kit (Bales, 1980) or materials from the SYMLOG

Consulting Group are very helpful in providing explanation, background, the forms for coding, and the necessary rating forms to use SYMLOG within the classroom.

1.1 Begin with an overview of what SYMLOG is, its history, its role as a field theory, and applications (see Bales and Cohen, 1979; Bales, 1985, 1988; Hare, 1989; and Kelly and Duran, 1992). The goal is to give students a broad-brush idea of the background of SYMLOG and the various contexts in which it has been applied. Some of the points covered here will subsequently be addressed more fully.

1.2 This step involves a fuller explanation of the SYMLOG theory and the dimensions which comprise the theoretical space. The interpersonal (or interaction) environment is comprised of three dimensions: (1) Dominant vs Submissive (Upward-Downward), (2) Friendly vs Unfriendly (Positive-Negative), (3) Acceptance of authority (task oriented) vs Non-acceptance of authority (Forward-Backward). Note that each dimension is bipolar and independent from the other dimensions.

1.3 This step will introduce the concept of polarization and unification, which are central to the theory of group dynamics. According to this theory, within a small group, members will often view the group as having two subgroups: the "good" subgroup (called the Reference Group) and the "bad" group (called the Opposite Group) (Kelly and Duran, 1992). There will be a tendency for the Reference Group members to unite and polarize against the members of the Opposite Group. There may also be people who are not in either subgroup; it is those individuals who may play the roles of scapegoat, mediator, or isolate. For students, the importance of the overview of group dynamics is to understand how it is possible to assess group functioning within the SYMLOG theoretical space.

1.4 Students are introduced to the major feedback systems used in SYMLOG: the Field Diagram and the Bargraph. Field Diagrams may be constructed by hand (see Bales and Cohen, 1979; Kelly and Duran, 1992) or by computer scoring

(Bales, 1984; Polley, 1984). The basic elements of the Field Diagram are introduced, including how the 3 dimensions are represented in the two dimensional space, the Reference Circle, the Opposite Circle, the Line of Polarization, the Line of Balance, the Swing area, the Inner Circle, and the roles which are played by members in various parts of the space. At times it is necessary to know the values and behavior focused on to fully understand the Field Diagram. This is done through the Bargraph, which contains the same 26 items as the rating sheets, but also contains personal (or group) data and effectiveness norms so the individual can assess performance on each of the 26 items. Both the Bargraph and the Field Diagram can be prepared at the individual, group, or organizational level, either from individual or aggregate data.

Behavioral coding

2.1 Students are introduced to behavioral coding: how it is done, some of the various coding schemes, and the linkage between behavior and perception (for a complete explanation of SYMLOG behavioral observation, see Bales and Cohen, 1979)

2.2 The session continues with an introduction of the coding scheme, using ACT and NON only (Wunder, 1987) since "considering the two jointly give[s] a more accurate picture of the global perception of the persons" (Bales and Cohen, 1979, p. 387). Scoring may be done on an act-by-act basis (Bales and Cohen, 1979) or by scoring only those acts or images which "stand out to the extent that they might by remembered after the team activity is finished" (Hare, 1992); we recommend that the important acts be scored. For our purpose of helping students make the link between the behaviors they see and the assessments they make, the very decision about what is "important" is informative. For detailed coding categories see Bales and Cohen, 1979.

2.3 A role-playing demonstration is provided for students to explain how coding is done. After receiving coding forms, the role-play of no more than 3 minutes is performed, with the students practicing coding the interaction. At the end of the role-play, the teacher leads a discussion in which students compare their coding with each other and the teacher. Any questions or clarifications are handled at this time.

2.4 The students then observe a videotape of group session, coding the interaction using the provided sheets (Bales and Cohen, 1979 or Bales, 1980). On the back of the first sheet, the student draws a diagram showing the physical location of the various members of the group and indicates each with an agreed upon three letter designation. At the end of each segment, students are able to ask questions and request clarification. This sequence is repeated until a variety of different group situations have been coded.

2.5 This session ends with a final time for discussion, questions, and clarification.

Behavioral rating

3.1 This session begins with an introduction to the behavioral rating form (see Figure 2). This measure is used to reflect the student's perception of the behavior observed. Instructions are provided as to how to fill out the form and what images are to be rated (people only - for our purposes, concepts will not be rated).

3.2 Since the same 26 item rating form is used for each of the multiple levels of a group and for a variety of contexts, it is vital that the proper context be defined and that the question (or probe) focuses attention on the specific behavior of the person being rated. An example of the probe is :"In general, what kinds of behavior does this person actually show?"

3.3 The students then view the videotape (same videotape as previous day).

3.4 Following viewing the videotape, they complete a behavioral rating form, using the same three letter codes they used in behavioral coding. As can be seen in

Figure 2, the possible response choices are rarely, sometimes, or often; the student makes an assessment of whether the individual exhibited this behavior during the session. Notice that there are three adjectives for each of the 26 items; if any *one* applies, the rater should respond to that adjective (Bales, 1988).

Value ratings

4.1 Following completion of behavioral ratings, the value ratings forms (see Figure 5) are introduced. The format is exactly the same as for the behavioral ratings, but the adjectives describe values.

4.2 Emphasize again to the students the situation which they will be evaluating (the context). In addition, the probe will address the value implications; i.e.. "What values does this person express in his/her behavior?" Again, if one of the adjectives applies, the rater should respond to that.

4.3 The students then complete value rating, again using the same three letter code they used in behavioral coding and behavioral rating. In response to the probe, the student responds "rarely, sometimes, or always".

Feedback and comparison

5.1 At this time the previous exercises are synthesized. Prior to beginning, it is important to note that the behavior-value link is unique for every individual and specific to every situation. The purpose of the coding is not to achieve reliability (to do so requires more extensive training), but rather to serve as a heuristic device for the student in learning to recognize behavior and its implications. Begin the discussion with a review of the group session coded to refresh students' memories.

5.2 Hand back the data to each individual student containing their act-by-act coding, the Field Diagram from the behavioral ratings, and the Field Diagram from the value ratings. Students should be given a few minutes to examine their data, focusing in particular of the following types of questions:

Figure 5

Rating Form - Individual and Organizational Values

SYMLOG CONSULTING GROUP

Person you are rating: _____

Reflect on the work-related experiences you have had with the person you are about to rate. Whether you have worked closely with this person or have had only limited contact, keep your impressions of him or her in mind as you answer the question to the right. Not all of the items in a set may seem to go together. IF EVEN ONE FITS, USE IT AS YOUR GUIDE.

QUESTION:
In general, what kinds of VALUES does this person show in his or her behavior?

DESCRIPTIVE ITEMS—Individual and Organizational Values			
1 Individual financial success, personal prominence and power	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
2 Popularity and social success, being liked and admired	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
3 Active teamwork toward common goals, organizational unity	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
4 Efficiency, strong impartial management	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
5 Active reinforcement of authority, rules, and regulations	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
6 Tough-minded, self-oriented assertiveness	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
7 Rugged, self-oriented individualism, resistance to authority	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
8 Having a good time, releasing tension, relaxing control	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
9 Protecting less able members, providing help when needed	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
10 Equality, democratic participation in decision making	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
11 Responsible idealism, collaborative work	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
12 Conservative, established, "correct" ways of doing things	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
13 Restraining individual desires for organizational goals	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
14 Self-protection, self-interest first, self-sufficiency	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
15 Rejection of established procedures, rejection of conformity	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
16 Change to new procedures, different values, creativity	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
17 Friendship, mutual pleasure, recreation	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
18 Trust in the goodness of others	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
19 Dedication, faithfulness, loyalty to the organization	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
20 Obedience to the chain of command, complying with authority	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
21 Self-sacrifice if necessary to reach organizational goals	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
22 Passive rejection of popularity, going it alone	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
23 Admission of failure, withdrawal of effort	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
24 Passive non-cooperation with authority	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
25 Quiet contentment, taking it easy	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
26 Giving up personal needs and desires, passivity	Rarely	Sometimes	Often

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- What are the types of behaviors which led to the my ratings?
- What are the similarities between the different Field Diagrams? What are the differences?
- Could I recognize the behaviors representing the different parts of the SYMLOG theoretical space?
- Were there differences in how I perceived behavior and values? What behaviors did I align with values?

5.3 Following this discussion, the class is divided into small groups of approximately five people. Students then compare their coding and Field Diagrams with others in their group and discuss the following types of questions:

- Were there variations in the perceptions of behavior?
- Were there variations in the perceptions of values?
- What might account for any differences which occurred?
- What were the kinds of behaviors which enhanced the performance of the group? Detracted from group performance?
- How do our perceptions impact the value judgments we make about others?
- How would by behavior contribute to value ratings others would give me?

5.4 Ultimately, the goal of the discussion is for students to begin to understand how ratings are grounded in behavior, as well as to recognize the types of communicative behaviors which facilitate effective group discussion and performance. Communication behavior is highlighted to learn about how actions are perceived by others and how those perceptions might influence interaction.

The emphasis on communicative behavior and interpretations we make based upon our perception of that behavior illuminates an important concept for the communication student; that competent communication behavior is the basis for effective group functioning. This model is designed to help the communication student understand the link between behavior and the value judgments we make about others.

Advantages and Disadvantages

As can be seen, there are many advantages to using SYMLOG in the classroom. These include the strong theoretical underpinnings in social-psychological theory, the ease of use, the capability to provide insight into both individual and group perceptions of functioning simultaneously, as well as the graphic visual representation of group dynamics. In addition, we propose that it can serve as a valuable communication classroom teaching tool, by providing a means to help students to understand the link between the assessments we make of other individuals and the communicative behavior which leads to those perceptions.

However, SYMLOG in the classroom is not without its limitations. In order to take maximum advantage of the potential of SYMLOG it is necessary for the instructor to be familiar with the theory, which can be relatively complex. In addition, to obtain a Field Diagram from the behavioral coding, it is necessary to hand-score it. This either consumes valuable class time or requires a greater time commitment outside of class on the part of the instructor or student.

Conclusion

As Hare (1989) notes, "It is evident that the 'new field theory' is no longer new. It is now well-established as a point of view and a method for research and practice in social psychology. However many of the possibilities of the multiple level systematic approach have yet to be fully explored." (Hare, 1989, p. 251). The proposed model for the use of SYMLOG in the communication classroom is one initial step in exploring the various applications of the theory and methodology. SYMLOG, as both a theory and a methodology, provides an exciting opportunity for communication teachers and scholars. It provides an innovative way to help students learn, not only about the group process itself, but the relationship between behavior and perceptions of group functioning.

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